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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of:

Tamotsu SUZUKI; Hiroyuki ASHIDA; Masatoshi TSUJI; all of Kyoto, Japan

Serial No: Not assigned

Filed: February 2, 2000

For: FM TRANSMITTER

JC759 U.S. PTO
09/496932Box PATENT APPLICATION
Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

Transmitted herewith for filing is the patent application identified above.

2 sheet(s) of drawings (formal informal) is(are) enclosed.

12 page(s) of specification and 1 page(s) of abstract of the invention are enclosed.

An assignment of the invention to ROHM CO., LTD. is enclosed will follow.

An associate power of attorney is enclosed will follow.

A verified statement to establish small entity status under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.9 & 1.27 is enclosed.

Declaration and Power of Attorney is enclosed will follow.

A certified copy of Japanese Patent Application No. 11-028870 filed February 5, 1999 from which priority is claimed under 35 U.S.C. § 119 will follow.

IDS enclosed (with references).

Preliminary Amendment is enclosed.

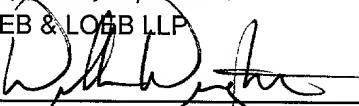
CALCULATION OF FEES								
ITEM		TOTAL NO. OF CLAIMS		NO. OF CLAIMS OVER BASE	LG/SM \$ ENTITY FEE		\$ AMOUNT	\$ FEE
A	TOTAL CLAIMS FEE	3	-20	0	LG=\$18 SM=\$9	\$18	\$ 0	
B	INDEPENDENT CLAIMS FEE*	1	-3	0	LG=\$78 SM=\$39	\$78	\$ 0	
C	SUBTOTAL - ADDITIONAL CLAIMS FEE (ADD FINAL COLUMN IN LINES A + B)							\$ 0
D	MULTIPLE-DEPENDENT CLAIMS FEE							LARGE ENTITY FEE = \$260 SMALL ENTITY FEE = \$130
E	BASIC FEE							LARGE ENTITY FEE = \$690 SMALL ENTITY FEE = \$380
F	TOTAL FILING FEE (ADD TOTALS FOR LINES C, D, AND E)							\$ 690
G	ASSIGNMENT RECORDING FEE							\$ 40
	*LIST INDEPENDENT CLAIMS 1							

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Respectfully submitted,

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By:



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U.S. PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of:

Tamotsu SUZUKI et al.

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Dear Sir:

I hereby certify that

- two copies of a letter of transmittal
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FM TRANSMITTER

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates to a frequency modulation (FM) transmitter for radio transmission of frequency modulated stereo audio signals.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

FM transmitters for radio transmission of frequency modulated stereo audio signals have been used. A typical FM transmitter has an arrangement as shown in Fig. 2.

As seen in Fig. 2, the transmitter includes:

a right audio section 10 having a pre-emphasis circuit 11, a volume 12, a limiter 13, a low-pass filter 14, and a muting circuit 15;

a left audio section 20 having a pre-emphasis circuit 21, a volume 22, a limiter 23, a low-pass filter 24, and a muting circuit 25;

a stereo modulator section 30 having an audio amplifier 31 for amplifying audio signals received from the audio sections 10 and 20, an oscillator circuit 32 coupled with an external quartz oscillator Xosc1 (having a fundamental frequency of 38 kHz) to generate 38 kHz signals, a multiplexer 33 for switching between right and left amplified 38 kHz audio signals received from the oscillator circuit 32, and a radio frequency (RF) amplifier circuit 34;

a modulation level adjust circuit 41 for regulating the output level of the multiplexer 33;

a pilot level adjust 42 for regulating the level of 19 kHz pilot signal obtained by frequency dividing the 38 kHz output of the oscillator circuit 32;

a mixer circuit 43 for mixing the regulated output signals of the

modulation level adjust circuit 41 with the output of the pilot level adjust circuit 42 to generate a composite signal;

a PLL frequency synthesizer 44 coupled to an external quartz oscillator Xosc2 (having a fundamental frequency of 7.2 MHz) and with the RF amplifier circuit 34 to receive the RF output thereof to generate a frequency control signal;

an oscillation control section 47 having a low-pass filter 45 for filtering the low frequency components of the output of the PLL frequency synthesizer 44;

a mixing circuit 46 for mixing the output of the PLL frequency synthesizer 44 with the composite signal received from the mixer circuit 43 to generate a frequency modulation signal;

a frequency modulation circuit 48 controlled by the output signal of the frequency control section 47; and

an RF output level regulation circuit 49 for regulating the RF output of the RF amplifier circuit 34.

It is noted that the stereo modulator section 30 and the PLL synthesizer 44 are themselves provided in the form of integrated circuits. The PLL synthesizer 44 is represented by a single block in Fig. 2, but it actually comprises several components such as a frequency divider, a phase comparator, and program counter.

The PLL synthesizer 44 frequency divides the signal generated by the quartz oscillator Xosc2 (having 7.2 MHz) into several different frequencies and supplies its output to an input end of a phase comparator for use as reference frequency signals. The RF frequency signal generated by the oscillation modulator circuit 48 is also frequency divided by a program counter, which are supplied to the other input end of the phase comparator

for comparison with the reference frequency signals. Upon comparison of the input signals, the phase comparator provides its outputs to the oscillation control section 47, which determines RF frequencies based on the frequency divided frequencies and the reference frequencies.

The PLL frequency synthesizer 44 is used to generate reference frequencies, for example, 100 kHz, 50 kHz, 25 kHz, 10 kHz, 9 kHz, 5 kHz, and 1 kHz for radio broadcasting. In this case, an appropriate external quartz oscillator Xosc2 is one having a fundamental frequency of 7.2 MHz.

As discussed above, prior art FM transmitters have been constructed as a composite of different types of elements such as audio sections 10 and 20, a stereo modulation section 30, a PLL frequency synthesizer 44, an oscillation controller 47, and a frequency modulation circuit 48. Of these, the stereo modulator 30 and the PLL frequency synthesizer 44 are formed into integrated circuits.

As a result, these components are arranged in a complex configuration and require complex wiring thereof when these elements are integrated to form an FM transmitter.

In addition, the stereo modulator section 30 and the PLL frequency synthesizer 44, built in the integrated circuit configurations, utilize different quartz oscillators Xosc1 and Xosc2 having different fundamental frequencies (38 kHz and 7.2 MHz), respectively, for their intended purposes. The use of such different quartz oscillators in one transmitter inevitably results in an extra manufacturing cost.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In view of the prior art drawbacks as mentioned above, it is therefore an object of the invention to provide an economic and compact FM

transmitter using a minimum number of elements such as a quartz oscillator.

In accordance with one aspect of the invention, a frequency modulating (FM) transmitter, comprising:

 a reference frequency generator;

 a reference frequency divider for frequency dividing said reference frequency;

 a stereo modulation circuit for frequency modulating right and left audio signals (stereo modulating) by one of the frequencies obtained in said reference frequency divider and for supplying the resultant signals stereo modulated signals as FM radio signals;

 an oscillator circuit for generating carrier waves to transmit said FM signals received from said stereo modulation circuit;

 a program counter for frequency dividing said carrier waves into variable frequency components; and

 a PLL frequency synthesizer which has a phase comparator circuit for comparing the output of said program counter with another output of said reference frequency divider to provide at its output end a control signal for controlling said oscillator circuit.

In this arrangement, since the FM transmitter may generate various frequency signals for both the stereo modulation and frequency comparison in PLL frequency synthesizer by means of a single oscillator, the resulting FM transmitter has most of the elements integrated in one chip, which implies that the transmitter has far smaller dimensions and a simpler structure in number and arrangement of elements than conventional transmitters, and hence increased reliability and less manufacturing cost. Further, the program counter may be constructed such that the frequency

division ratios of the program counter and the modulation level of the stereo modulator circuit are controllable by external means. It is then possible to vary the carrier frequency of the FM transmission wave as needed and set the FM modulation at a characteristically optimum level.

The frequency of the reference frequency generator may be chosen to be 7.6 MHz or an integral multiple or fractional frequencies of 7.6 MHz obtained by dividing 7.6 MHz by integers (hereinafter referred to as integer fractions). It should be noted that this choice of the fundamental frequency allows provision of not only commonly used 38 kHz and 19 kHz stereo modulation frequencies through the frequency divisions but also FM radio frequencies which are close to conventional frequencies by the same quartz oscillator.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will now be described in detail by way of example with reference to accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 is a block diagram of an FM transmitter according to the invention; and

Fig. 2 is a block diagram of a conventional FM transmitter.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Referring to Fig. 1, there is shown an FM transmitter of the invention.

As shown in the Fig. 1, the FM transmitter has an integrated semiconductor circuit 100 including a main portion of the FM transmitter and external components such as a quartz oscillator Xosc.

It is seen from Fig. 1 that a right audio signal R input to an input terminal is passed to one input end of a multiplexer 71 through an audio

circuit 50 which consists of a volume 51, a pre-emphasis circuit 52, a limiter 53, and a low-pass filter 54.

Similarly, a left audio signal L is passed to the other input end of the multiplexer 71 through an audio circuit 60 which consists of a volume 61, a pre-emphasis circuit 62, a limiter 63, and a low-pass filter 64.

The two input signals supplied to the multiplexer 71 are alternately supplied to a stereo modulation level adjust circuit 73 by a 38 kHz subcarrier serving as a switching signal supplied by a reference frequency oscillator 80-1. The 38 kHz signal from the oscillator 80-1 is frequency divided into halves and passed through a variable capacitor 72 before it is supplied as a pilot signal to the stereo modulation level adjust circuit 73. The variable capacitor 72 is provided for frequency separation of the 19 kHz signal from the 34 kHz signal. In the stereo modulation level adjust circuit 73, both the 19 kHz pilot signal and the signal supplied from the multiplexer 71 are regulated in level. The output of the stereo modulation level adjust circuit 73 is then coupled to an FM modulation level adjust circuit 74, where the signal is regulated in level before it is output as FM modulated signal.

The FM modulation level adjust circuit 74 may cut off its output upon receipt of an external mute signal. The variable capacitor 72 may be adjusted so as to make the switching signal of the multiplexer 71 in phase with the 19 kHz pilot signal. The multiplexer 71, the variable capacitor 72, the stereo modulation level adjust circuit 73, and the FM modulation level adjust circuit 74 constitute a stereo modulation section 70.

A phase comparator section 80-2 receives at the reference frequency input terminal of a phase comparator circuit 87, a signal having a fixed frequency, 50 kHz for example, from the reference frequency oscillator 80-1.

Unlike the modulation frequencies (38 kHz and 19 kHz) of the stereo modulation section 70, the frequency of the signal may be set to an appropriate frequency for the transmitter as needed, which is 50 kHz in this example. On the other hand, a radio transmission signal is provided to the program counter 86, where it is frequency divided by a prescribed frequency ratio set in the program counter 86. The resultant signals are supplied to an input terminal (referred to as frequency comparison terminal) of the phase comparison circuit 87 as a reference signal for comparison (referred to as signal frequency comparison signal).

The phase comparison circuit 87 compares the phases of the two input signals and outputs an oscillation control signal via a low-pass filter 88. The program counter 86, phase comparison circuit 87, and low-pass filter 88 constitute the phase comparator 80-2.

In the reference frequency oscillator 80-1, the external quartz oscillator Xosc (having a fundamental frequency of 7.6 MHz) and capacitors C6 and C7 are connected to an oscillator circuit 81, which generates an output of 7.6 MHz. This frequency is further divided by a frequency divider 83 to 1/200 of 7.6 MHz, i.e. 38 kHz when the signal is supplied to the multiplexer 71, and to 1/2 of 7.6 MHz when it is supplied to the variable capacitor 72.

The signal is also divided in frequency to 1/76 by the frequency divider 82, and further to 1/2 by the frequency divider 85, and then supplied to the reference frequency terminal of the phase comparison circuit 87. It should be understood that the frequency division ratio set in the frequency divider 85 is not limited to 1/2. It may be set at an arbitrary ratio in connection with the frequency division ratios of the program counter 86.

Each of the frequency divider circuits 82-85 may be provided in the

form of a T-shape flip-flop CMOS logic circuit, having exactly 50% duty cycle of a clock signal supplied thereto. Thus, the frequency range that the variable capacitor 72 must regulate in separating the two frequencies, can be small. It would be appreciated that the duty cycles are little affected by temperature, so that the modulator section has a desirable temperature characteristic. In effect, the modulator can be used without any temperature adjustment.

The quartz oscillator Xosc, capacitors C6 and C7, oscillator circuit 81, and the frequency dividers 82-85 constitute the reference frequency oscillator section 80-1. The reference frequency oscillator section 80-1 and the phase comparator section 80-2 together constitute the PLL frequency synthesizer 80.

In this manner, the invention provides an improvement in FM transmitters, which utilizes only one quartz oscillator Xosc of 7.6 MHz, instead of two quartz oscillators as in a prior art transmitter with a first oscillator Xosc1 (quartz oscillator having a fundamental frequency of 38 kHz) for generating a reference frequency signal for stereo modulation, and a second quartz oscillator Xosc2 (quartz oscillator of a fundamental frequency of 7.2 MHz) for generating a reference frequency signal for phase comparison.

Thus, in order to make a single quartz oscillator usable in two ways as a generator of a reference frequency on one hand and as a generator of divisional frequency signals for stereo modulation on the other, the invention has overcome dedicated use of 38 kHz quartz oscillator as a reference frequency source. Instead, the invention utilizes the same quartz oscillator simultaneously as a source of different radio frequencies including 100 kHz, 50 kHz, 25 kHz, 10 kHz, 9 kHz, 5 kHz, and 1 kHz, by

frequency dividing the fundamental frequency of the quartz oscillator. In view of the fact that a 7.6 MHz quartz oscillator has been used in generating the reference frequency, the invention obtains new radio frequencies which are derived advantageously from such frequency divisions of the fundamental frequency of 7.6 MHz. It is then possible to provide, in addition to the fundamental frequency of 7.6 MHz itself, such integer fractions derived from the fundamental frequency of 7.6 MHz as 1.9 MHz, 3.8 MHz, 15.2 MHz, and 22.8 MHz, for example.

The modulation signal from the stereo modulation section 70 and the oscillation control signal from the phase comparison section 80-2 are supplied to a frequency modulation (FM) circuit 90 via a resistor r1 and via a resistor r2, respectively. The FM circuit 90 generates a radio-frequency (RF) signal in accordance with these signals. The RF signal is then passed to RF amplifiers 102 and 103 for amplification thereof before it is transmitted as an RF output signal. The FM circuit 90, adapted to generate frequency modulated RF signals, comprises a variable capacitors Vc1 and Vc2, capacitors C1 - C4, a reactor L, and a transistorized oscillator circuit 91.

Upon receipt of a tip enable signal CE, a clock signal CK, and control data DA, a shift register 101 provides digital control signals or digital instruction signals to volumes 51 and 61, stereo modulation level adjust circuits 73 and 74, program counter 86, and RF amplifier circuit 103. A reference voltage Vref is formed by resistors r3 and r4, capacitor C5, and an operational amplifier OP1.

It would be understood that although the resistors r1 and r2, capacitors C5, C6, and C7 are shown in Fig. 1 to be external elements, they could be built-in in the integrated semiconductor circuit 100 of the FM

transmitter. It would be also understood that terminals for connection with a power supply and ground (not shown) may be provided as needed.

In the FM transmitter of the invention, all the components except for the quartz oscillator Xosc and the modulation elements, are integrated in a single semiconductor tip. The tip may be formed by BiCMOS processes. Analog signal processor sections 50 and 60, stereo modulation section 70, FM circuit 90, and RF amplifiers 102 and 103 may be provided in the form of bipolar circuits. PLL frequency synthesizer 80, which is a digital or pulse signal processor, and shift register 101 may be CMOS circuits.

As described above, the invention avoids the use of two independent quartz oscillators for stereo modulation and for PLL frequency synthesizer. Instead, the invention employs a single oscillator, from which not only the 38 kHz and 19 kHz stereo modulation frequencies but also a set of different fractional frequencies for the PLL frequency synthesizer are derived. Accordingly, by choosing the fundamental frequency of the PLL frequency synthesizer at 7.6 MHz (or alternatively an integral multiple of 7.6 MHz, or fractional frequencies obtained by dividing 7.6 MHz by integers) only a single quartz oscillator may suffice as a generator of different frequencies.

Because most of the components of the FM transmitter are integrated in the form of a single semiconductor device, except for such external components as a quartz oscillator Xosc and oscillator modulation elements Vc1 and Vc2, the FM transmitter of the invention has a greatly reduced number of components arranged in a neat and compact configuration and hence has a high reliability.

In addition, the device as a whole may be integrated in the form of BiCMOS circuit having analog components and digital components in separate regions. The analog components such as audio sections 50 and 60,

stereo modulator 70, oscillator modulator circuit 90, and RF amplifiers 102 and 103 can be bipolar circuits, while digital components such as PLL frequency synthesizer 80, and shift register 101 can be CMOS circuits so that they are formed in their most appropriate configurations.

CLAIMS

What we claim is:

1. A frequency modulating (FM) transmitter, comprising:
 - a reference frequency generator;
 - a reference frequency divider for frequency dividing said reference frequency;
 - a stereo modulation circuit for frequency modulating a right and a left audio signals (stereo modulating) by one output of said reference frequency divider to supply the resultant signals stereo modulated signals as FM signals;
 - an oscillator circuit for generating carrier waves to transmit said FM signals received from said stereo modulation circuit;
 - a program counter for frequency dividing said carrier waves into variable frequency components; and
 - a PLL frequency synthesizer which has a phase comparator circuit for comparing the output of said program counter with another output of said reference frequency divider to provide at its output end a control signal for controlling said oscillator circuit.
2. The FM transmitter as claimed in claim 1, wherein the frequency division ratios of said program counter and the modulation level of said stereo modulation circuit are externally controllable.
3. The FM transmitter as claimed in claim 1, wherein the frequency of said reference frequency generator is set to either one of 7.6 MHz, an integral multiple of 7.6 MHz, or integer fractions of 7.6 MHz.

FM TRANSMITTER

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An FM transmitter includes: an oscillation circuit for FM radio transmission; a stereo modulation circuit for modulating a right and a left audio signals and outputting a control signal for controlling the oscillation circuit; a program counter for frequency dividing the output of the oscillation circuit into variable frequencies; a reference frequency divider for dividing 7.6 MHz reference frequency (or an integral multiple of 7.6 MHz); and a PLL frequency synthesizer having a phase comparator for comparing the phases of the outputs of the program counter and of the reference frequency divider to generate a control signal for controlling the oscillation circuit. The stereo modulation circuit is adapted to perform frequency modulation using a clock signal generated by the reference frequency divider. The transmitter has only one quartz oscillator and a greatly reduced number of elements, so that it can be provided in a very compact form at a low manufacturing cost.

FIG. 1

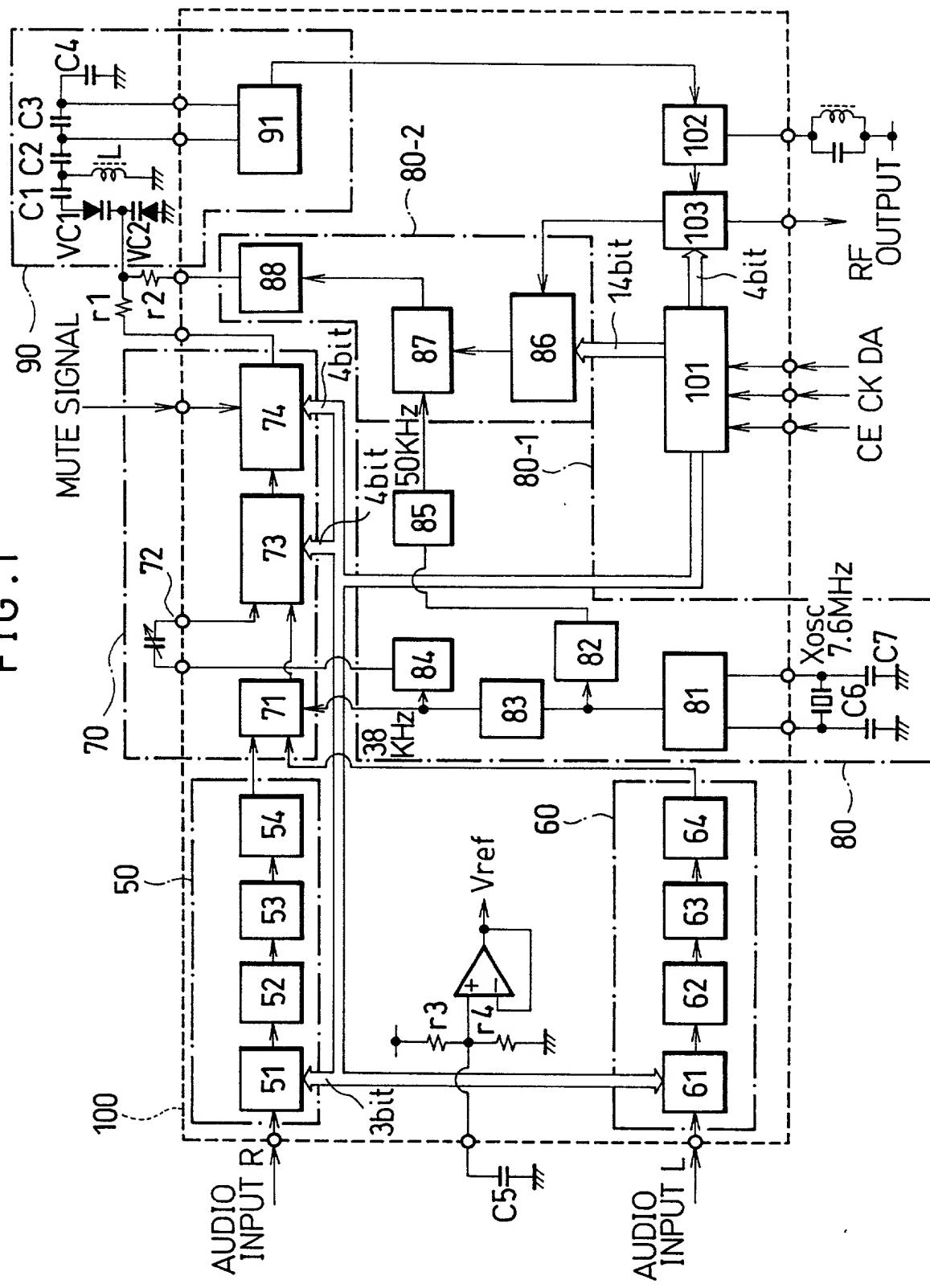


FIG. 2

